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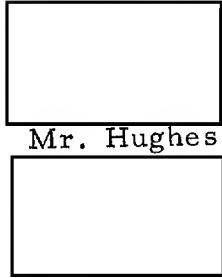
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DEBRIEFING OF FRANCIS GARY POWERS

Tape: #8
Date: 15 February 1962
Time:

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Present:



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Mr. Hughes

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[redacted] Hello, Frank, we thought we'd start back at - this is

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[redacted] speaking - we thought we'd start back with
the mission preparation, Frank, - remember we had some
briefings there at Adana after we first looked at the route
and things and then, of course, the final pre-take off

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stuff there at [redacted] before you took off. What we're

} trying to establish now is - was there anything in our
procedures we could have improved upon, or anything that
as you recall, or various comments you might have
on this stage of it?

Powers: No, I can think of no way it could have been improved.
I had adequate time to study the rules. The weather was

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a little off but that was no one's fault - I mean, the winds.

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[REDACTED]

The winds were.

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[REDACTED]

Powers: Yes, seemed to have a stronger westerly wind.

Remember, Frank, you took off about 29 minutes late, or later than we had planned?

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[REDACTED]

Powers: Yes.

Was that ... celestial that we had out-bound for you any good?

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[REDACTED]

Powers: Wouldn't work.

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[REDACTED]

Powers: Didn't work.

I tried it once or twice and couldn't use this law that fo**r**mented confusion--

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[REDACTED]

Powers: That's right.

But it was just too much, too much time to be effective.

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[REDACTED]

Powers: How about ^{THE} ~~this~~ running radio fixes that we had?

Many of them ^{WERE} ~~ARE~~ good. One of them was excellent. I don't remember the name of the city but it was close to the border - I mean, it was down in the southern part of the Soviet Union. It was excellent. This one at Chelyabinsk - I think that's the way it is pronounced -

[REDACTED]

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was a very good station, the frequency was fine.

The call signs were very hard for me to pick up.

I don't know whether they were absolutely right or not but the frequencies were. There was one or two - there were many frequencies on the map and several of them I couldn't pick up anything when I tried, but maybe they were off the air temporarily or something like that.

Interr: Do you have any recommendations on items that we might have included in your flight packet?

Powers: Well, I think maybe there was some things that could have been excluded.

(laughter)

Like - I had forgotten that some of my check lists had, it had the word cameras on it. I, at first, denied that I even knew that there were cameras on it. They showed me a check list that said "turn camera on, this is the way you do it," and it was embarrassing.

Interr: It was the same as this --

Powers: Obvious lie there.

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Interr: Do you remember the emergency map we prepared for you, Frank?

Powers: The one with the escape routes back to the south? Fortunately, I had that in my flying suit and destroyed it on my way down on the parachute. It was in hundreds of pieces and scattered over a large area.

Interr: How about your flight charts and the maps and things? Were they all -- how were the . . . , were they clear for you and --

Powers: Yes, they were clear and good. I just wish there were some way that those could have been destroyed. But they got those practically - well, there were a few torn places in them and a few burned places but they had the majority of the route.

Interr: Did they have all the route?

Powers: An area northwest of Sverdlovsk was missing. Some of the area around the Aral Sea was missing. In fact, the missile site there was missing but - when they questioned me about the map - but later I saw the map again and they had found a little piece and put it in and it showed the

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place in ... and the railroad and put the fixes of where these places were supposed to be.

Interr: Frank, was the missile site open weather-wise when you passed over it?

Powers: No, the weather started just south of there again. There was a clear place east of the Sea but it socked in solid from about the river there - I don't remember the name of it, north.

Interr: I see.

Powers: And I never saw anything there that resembled a railroad or a missile site. Although, a little to the east it was clear and I spotted an airfield that was not on the map that I think I could give you an approximate location when I see the same type map again.

Interr: Back a little bit, Frank. Do you feel you had adequate rest and proper food and things like this?

Powers: Yes, there was no problem there.

Interr: Was there anything at all that - any problems at [redacted] that may have caused any discomfort or adversely affected your mission in any way?

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Powers: No, it was a little warm that morning because of the delay but [redacted] held his shirt over me and helped quite a bit there, but other than that, just normal.

Interr: I remember how you were sweating there.

Interr: Did you have any reservations about the - regarding the status of the aircraft?

Powers: Oh, no.

Interr: Still had - I understand they still had [redacted] who was your crew chief.

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Powers: And, he's reliable. I trust those boys with anything. If they say an airplane is ready to fly, it's ready to fly.

Interr: Well, does anybody have any other questions on mission preparation or anything about that? We'd kind of like to go into the take-off and climb-out phase now if we could. How was your take-off and climb-out, Frank?

Powers: Everything was normal and according to schedule. I think the contrails were higher than scheduled but they disappeared before I reached level-off.

Interr: Were they heavy or light contrails? Do you recall, Frank?

Powers: Well, it seemed to me that they kept getting lighter

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the higher I got there, I don't know. At one period I think they were pretty heavy but it's hard to recall.

Interr: Did you see them in a pilot's skid or do you have a better way of doing it by now?

Powers: We had a rear-view mirror on the outside.

Interr: Oh, this was --

Powers: Added later. I don't think we had it when you were --

Interr: No, you didn't have it.

Powers: But, it was up on the top--we'd moved the sun visor and see the whole...

Interr: Oh, I see.

Powers: But, that thing was not completely accurate because sometimes you could have a thin contrail which could be seen from the ground that you couldn't see in the mirror.

Interr: In that mirror, Frank, can you see the tail section of the aircraft itself?

Powers: Yes.

Interr: You can.

Powers: You can see the --

Interr: You can see the horizontal and --

Powers: You can see horizontal and vertical stabilizers, but we have a sun visor that we slide around to keep the direct rays of the sun off of the pilot that was in there and most of the time it covers this mirror. When you want to use it, you move it over and look back.

Interr: At what altitude do you figure that the contrails cease then?

Powers: It was several thousand feet below level-off altitude but I don't know exactly.

Interr: What was your level-off altitude?

Powers: As well as I can remember, it was somewhere around 68,000 feet. That was not my scheduled level-off altitude but the weight of the fuel and the weight of the aircraft and so forth, it would not climb higher at--

Interr: At that point in the mission.

Powers: It had to wait until the fuel was burned down to go on.

Interr: Frank, was the flight uneventful up until you reached the Soviet border?

Powers: Well, I had a Mach censor malfunction in the autopilot,

not too long before this happened and I was flying manually from then on. I saw two contrails that I thought were aircraft looking for me. I thought it was the same aircraft. This was south of the first target - the rocket launching site there at the Aral Sea. One went parallel to my course - I estimated 20 miles to my right - parallel to the course south going fast, and a few minutes later, approximately the same distance to the right, going north, parallel to the course. And that's all I saw.

Interr: How far below you would you say the aircraft was?

Powers: I would say quite a bit but I have no way of knowing.

I was pulling no contrails at the time and he had heavy contrails. Well, just from looking, I would have said he was at least 20,000 feet below me.

Interr: Could you actually see the aircraft or could you just see the contrails?

Powers: No, I couldn't see the aircraft, just the contrails.

Interr: Was that the only signs of fighters you saw?

Powers: That was the only signs I saw.

Interr: Did you - of it, just--

Powers: I kept looking because when I saw those I assumed they had me on the radar, and I kept looking as often as I could, scanning around, and saw no other signs of contrails at all.

Interr: Your camera was on at this time?

Powers: Yes, it was on. I don't remember exactly when it was turned on but it was turned on according to the schedule, and there were two power settings, high and low. I think but - I don't remember - I believe they were low for a while and then later on we turned it up to high power. I think that's the way it was.

Interr: This was installed after I left, too, Frank. What - you turn this on when, about level-off or crossing the border or when did you--? Do you recall when that was or maybe ... can--

Powers: I don't remember when it was but I know it was according to the schedule in ... and I'm sure there must be duplicates of this map that would show the position when I turned it on.

Interr: Well, Frank, let's assume that we've leveled off now and we're cruising up to the first indication of serious

trouble occurred. Your aircraft was operating normally except for the Mach censor?

Powers: Yes.

Interr: Which went out just before the trouble?

Powers: Oh, within, I'd say, fifteen or twenty minutes before. I don't remember exactly but it wasn't long before.

It was getting up into the area where there was good wind.

Interr: Was all other auxiliary equipment operating? In other words, your camera was operating?

Powers: Oh, perfectly, according to the --

Interr: The ... were indicating sexton, driftside? ^{SEXTON}

Powers: Yes, everything was operating good except the Mach censor.

Interr: How much radio equipment did you have turned on?

Powers: I had the UHF on but it was on our channel that ~~it~~ I was instructed to take off on. I don't remember the frequency or anything but I never heard anything on that. I had the radio compass on--.

Interr: Just for the record, Frank, you had no radio communication with the base after take-off?

Powers: No. I think I heard --

Interr: I know it's not ... but I--

Powers: I think I heard a couple of clicks from mobile control, that's the system we had, but I can't even be positive of that. I think I can remember that though. But that was showing me that he was going off the air. I didn't answer as well as I can remember.

Interr: How was the weather compared to what we gave you, Frank, at the briefing?

Powers: Well, I can't remember exactly how it was briefed but I can remember exactly how it was. There was a-- it was somewhere around the border, maybe south of the Soviet Union border, it became undercast and it continued for a long way until I got to this area south and east of the Aral Sea. There was a wide strip - I could see the Aral Sea in the distance in the strip - ran through it on each side as far as I could see of clear weather, hazy there. Then, at the river that flows into the northern part of the Aral Sea completely undercast again, continued for many miles north. I

don't know exactly how far but I could show you approximately on the map. But in the northern of this weather it started getting thin and I began to be able to see through it straight down but not --. Several miles south of Sverdlovsk it became completely clear, beautiful weather, and we had some important targets and flight lines in those areas there and was getting what I thought was excellent coverage. And as far as I could see to the north, it was clear.

Interr: Frank, when you broke out, were you on track or did you have to make corrections?

Powers: I had to make corrections. I was right, of course.

Interr: This is why you said earlier you thought the winds ^{RECORDED} were probably stronger than they were?

Powers: Yes.

Interr: Could you guess how far off you were?

Powers: I'd say 20 or 30 miles. I mean, this is guess again. I had put in a slight correction in my heading because I had drifted off to the right also before I got to the Aral Sea. From there I put in a slight correction but

it wasn't enough. And I can't be sure of the distance off course but it was to the right, of course -maybe 20, 20--it wasn't much.

Interr: Also, do you remember whether you saw Chelyabinsk - is that the way you pronounce it?

Powers: Yes, I saw that definitely.

Interr: You saw it?

Powers: And had a good radio station there that I picked up.

Interr: Is that right after you broke out or was it a few minutes before?

Powers: It wasn't long after I was - I came from over the clouds there. It was one of the first places I recognized definitely. I had it on the radio but I couldn't be sure the transmitter was located in this place.

Interr: Did you notice any ... sites at Chelyabinsk?

Powers: No, I - they showed me photographs later that they said came from the negatives that I had on the aircraft and it showed some somewhere. They didn't say where they were.

Interr: They - meaning the Russians?

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Powers: Yes. But I could not see through the driftside anything that resembled a launching site of any kind.

Interr: Frank, at this time when you were just cruising along how did your fuel and oxygen ... plot out against your curve we had for you?

Powers: They were either on the curve or above.

Interr: How about the ETAs we had on the green cards?

Powers: They were working out fairly good. I don't remember exactly, but fairly close.

Interr: About where, Frank, did the Mach censor start acting up? Was it around - was it before you broke out or - can you recall?

Powers: It was right in the area where I broke out but I don't know exactly where it was.

Interr: How many minutes would you estimate this was before you -- ?

Powers: Oh, I don't know -- 15 or 20 minutes. I really don't remember.

Interr: Frank, was the compass - did it appear that the compass was working all right?

Powers: It seemed to be working good.

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Interr: Remember, we had plotted for you those true heading checks ... time.

Powers: Yes.

Interr: I don't know if you used them or ever thought you would have to, I was just wondering if you ever did use them or do you think it is a good idea to have this type of thing?

Powers: I used them. Yes, this was good because it gave me a little more confidence when I was over the clouds there and I remember using them definitely.

Interr: You said you flew at Langley. You didn't use the other ... of auto-piloting, I mean you didn't use the manual - you were flying manually, right?

Powers: Manually, yes. Completely

Interr: O.K.

Powers: The auto-pilot was completely disengaged.

Interr: Were you able to fly the briefed altitude profile?

Powers: Yes. As soon as I arrived at 70, I leveled off and maintained 70 until this happened.

Interr: How long was it before you got to 70?

Powers: It arrived there at the time it should have, the regular cruise climb.

Interr: Did you have any turbulence at all, Frank?

Powers: No, it was very smooth.

Interr: How was the chartered indicated air speed scheduled during the cruise?

Powers: Pardon?

Interr: How was the - in other words, were you able to get the chartered indicated air speed that we had on the card?

Powers: Well, I was following the card.

Interr: You were following the schedule then?

Powers: Yes.

Interr: After level-off, you didn't see any contrails at all?

Powers: No, it was before - they stopped before I reached level-off. I'm sure it was in the sixty thousands of feet but I don't know. I think the lower sixties.

Interr: At any time did you require to - any unusual (trem) in the aircraft at all?

Powers: No, everything seemed normal. You know, you have considerable nose-up (trem) as you go along. I think

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the fuel is used out and so forth. But that's normal in all flights.

Interr: Did you transfer fuel at any time?

Powers: No. Well, I can't be sure of that, I don't really know but I don't think so.

Interr: Now, what was the first indication of serious trouble?

Are there any additional items that you might remember pertaining to the flight? For example, any trouble with the aircraft hydraulic or electric system at all?

Powers: Everything seemed to be working perfectly except the auto-pilot.

Interr: Any unusual engine temperatures, pressure readings?

Powers: No, they were good. RPM was according to the schedule for the temperature.

Interr: Frank, you mentioned seeing the river, the Syr Darya River, and then the other groundpoint you mentioned having identified was Chelyabinsk --

Powers: Well, south --

Interr: Well, in that area. North of Chelyabinsk do you remember seeing Kyshtym--?

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Powers: Which?

Interr: Kyshtym, a large --

Powers: You don't happen to have a map do you?

Interr: I don't have one with me but--

Interr: Well, that's why I wanted the book. We have - we didn't bring a map because we were going up there and --

Powers: It seems that the clouds there were running in two different groups. There was a strip of clear weather right across the Aral Sea and I think to the south of the Aral Sea. I don't know how many miles wide this strip of clear weather was. But, around in the area of -

what do you call it? (Turatom)? or --

Interr: Right, (Turatom).

Powers: The clouds seemed to come out - to pass that point and go - I mean, the clear area extended a little north. Well, I'm probably confusing you here. The clouds were not in a straight line, the edge of the clouds.

They came out to the east of (Turatom) and seemed to break to the north so that I could see clear area

farther north, east of (Turatom).

Interr: Could we go back to this when we get the map?

Interr: Sure.

Powers: That would be better.

Interr: Did you see any fighters that you thought were making an attempt to intercept you at all?

Powers: Well, the only thing that I saw were the two contrails which - since they were parallel to my course, exactly parallel to my course it seemed like, I assumed that they were trying to locate me. I saw nothing that indicated a pass or a search - flying around me as a straight line, up and down.

Interr: He was off to your right?

Powers: He was off to my right, yes.

Interr: He was going in the direction you were going?

Powers: First, he was coming in the opposite direction.

Interr: Oh, I see.

Powers: And then a few minutes later, in the same direction I was going in, faster.

Interr: And I would guess that you were (searching) through
DRIFT SIGHT
(driftside) --

Powers: Yes, I look very closely at those things.

Interr: Did he just disappear, Frank, or --

Powers: He went on straight ahead, on the same heading and I don't know what happened to him. I don't believe he changed course and I never saw him again.

Interr: Well, was this after you broke out of the clouds near Chelyabinsk or earlier?

Powers: No, this was earlier, near the Aral Sea.

Interr: And after you broke out of the clouds, at that point you didn't see any contrails?

Powers: I saw no contrails.

Interr: Did you recognize the type?

Powers: What?

Interr: Did you recognize the type fighter?

Powers: I didn't see the plane itself, I just saw the contrails. It was moving fast though. He passed me - he was off to the .dc but he just went right on by.

Interr: You didn't take any evasive action.

Powers: No, I just kept on course. It made me feel good at that time--there was no (pulsure) or making any type of

intercept attempt - so, he didn't bother me very much.

Interr: Did you see any surface-to-air missile sites that you recognized?

Powers: No, not at all.

Interr: You were at a constant 70,000 feet at this time, Frank, there was no variation in your altitude?

Powers: No variation at all. I maintained 70,000 feet from the time I could reach it -- well, I cruise-climbed to 70. When I got there I kept throttling the power back so I could maintain 70 and maintained 70 very closely. Oh, I varied I guess maybe 100-200 feet one way or the other a few times but no more than that.

Interr: Your cabin pressurization worked all right?

Powers: It was good.

Interr: I think that brings us up to the phenomenon.

Powers: Yes.

Interr: What was your first indication, Frank, that -- there was any trouble at all?

Powers: Well, I just made a turn - I think it was a little more than a 90° turn - lining up on a flight line that, if I

remember correctly, went over just the southwestern outskirts of Sverdlovsk except that was still ahead of me. I made this turn - during this turn I had an opportunity to use the drift-site and look around, to scan the area. I rolled out on my heading and lined up on this flight line so that I could be right on the course all right up through there. I began recording the time that I reached these points, the altitude, the weather - the regular procedure that we were supposed to go through - and taking instrument readings and so forth and it was while I was taking these instrument readings that I heard or felt an explosion. Now - and I can't be sure of what happened or how - the sensation that I had at the time. I know that it seemed like I had a slight acceleration, very slight, just a little boost that sort of seemed like pushed the air plane forward a little. It seems that I may have heard this but I don't know.

Interr: Did the flash occur simultaneously with this surge or did it immediately precede it or was it immediately subsequent to it?

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Powers: Well, you see I was looking down at the papers at the time, writing this stuff down, and -- the instrument -- and since this thing - I looked up and the sky was orange. Just all around me --

Interr: ... simultaneously then, the surge and the flash.

Powers: Yes, I would say that they both occurred at the same time. Because, as soon as the one happened, I noticed the other - as soon as I could look up.

Interr: This orange flash - it was not a fireball-type thing, it was just the whole sky seemed to be illuminated?

Powers: Well, I can't be too sure, calling it a flash. Because when I looked up, the whole sky just seemed to be orange, everything I could see. I don't remember particularly looking around to see if everything was but all that I could see this way was orange.

Interr: Now, this flash, when it occurred, Frank, you felt nothing within the aircraft itself? In other words, this was not an explosion within the aircraft?

Powers: Well, see, I have never experienced an explosion in an aircraft but I assume that you feel it some way or the other. This - well, you could definitely tell

that it was there I think, I don't know. But there was nothing like this.

Interr: Then you think it was something outside of the aircraft?

Powers: I am almost positive that it was external. And my impression is that it was behind me and to the right, and why I have this impression, I don't know, but that's the impression that formed in my mind that I recalled later.

Interr: You had not seen anything in your drift-site or in your rear-vision mirror? Did you get any indication, you didn't see anything coming towards you, coming up underneath you?

Powers: Well, you see I had just finished this turn and lined it up on course, getting my instrument readings and recording the altitude and so forth, I didn't have time for maybe 2 or 3 minutes to scan around, look around, and I didn't use that. The sun visor was over the mirror and I often wished that I had glanced up and tried to find out what happened but I never did.

Interr: Frank, this might seem like a funny question but can

you describe what shade of orange it was?

Powers: It was an odd looking orange but as far as describing it, I don't know.

Interr: Was it more of a reddish tint to it or--?

Powers: I think pinkish. Pinkish-orange? I don't think I can do it.

Interr: Did you hear (anything), Frank, at this time?

Powers: Well, I don't know. I don't know what my first impression was. I don't know whether I heard this or felt it, this little acceleration. I think I must have heard something. I think I must have heard something because there was definitely something and it caused me to look up and see this and I said - I don't know whether aloud or how, but I said, "Oh, God, I've had it now!" I don't know why or anything else but--. You see, the radio compass was on - tuned in on station - and I was getting noise from that and I can't be sure that I heard it but I sense this someway or the other.

Interr: Was this orange flash business in the sense of a flashbulb going off, quick and over with or was there a persistence

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to? In a sense of could it have been essentially
smoke or something of this sort?

Powers: Well, I don't--

Interr: With a ... it would have a persistence, you see.

Powers: I don't think it was smoke. The only thing I know is
I looked up, it was orange; I looked back to the instrument
panel, the right wing started to go down like it was
making a turn to the right; I corrected that, so I didn't
look back outside again; I was watching my instruments.
And I never recall seeing this orange color again, but
I don't--

Interr: When your head was down though, when it went--

Powers: Yes, and I just glanced up --

Interr: ... for you then.

Powers: Looked, the thing started to make a slight turn to the
right and I looked down on my instruments to correct
this turn and--

Interr: This was within seconds after the flash, Frank?

Powers: It was immediately practically. I don't know the length
of time in there. It seemed like a long time but I am

sure it was faster. It seemed just for a second that everything had just stopped. It seemed to me that time had just stopped for an instant there, I don't know.

Interr: The first reaction of the aircraft was this slight turn?

Powers: Well, the first thing I felt seemed like a slight acceleration, very slight. Just like someone coming up and giving it a little shove. Looked up, the right wing started to drop down, very slowly, and normally, just as if it was a little heavy or something and wanted to turn to the right. And the ... dropped back up to normal, fine. But about the time it was coming up to normal or just after it reached normal, the nose started to descend. And I immediately applied correction and there was no connection, the control ... was loose. I felt no vibrations, no snaps, nothing through the control ...

Interr: Frank, I know you've had a flame-out or two, I recall them --

Powers: Oh, yes, several.

Interr: Is that what it -- did it feel anything like a flame-out?

Powers: No, at the time this happened, definitely not a flame-out. But I recall sometime after that, seeing the RPM going down.

Interr: Yes.

Powers: But I don't even remember where this was in - whether it was before this thing started making these violent maneuvers or during this, I can't recall.

Interr: So you - how about your cabin pressurization? Did you feel it change at this time or--?

Powers: I didn't realize when it did change but all at once I realized I was inflated - the suit was inflated.

Interr: Did you make any effort to gain altitude at any time during this sequence of events?

Powers: No, I had no time after this happened to.

Interr: Frank, did you notice any damage during this period to the aircraft and all?

Powers: When I first heard this thing or felt this thing, looked out and saw the lights, the wing went down, corrected it, the nose started going down, pulled it back, I had noticed nothing, no damage, I had seen no holes in

anything. Of course, I wasn't looking for this. I was trying to get the aircraft in a right attitude. But right after I brought the wing up, the nose went down - very slowly, just normal - the way an air plane will fly - and I applied the back pressure on the stick and the stick just coming back - no resistance to it. It felt as though it was just loose.

Interr: The nose continued to go down?

Powers: Oh, it kept going down faster and faster and faster until - now, I can only assume what happened here and this is what I think happened. It went down until the wings were broadside to the wind and I think they folded. There was some violent maneuvers right there and I don't know exactly what happened at this particular instance when these things may have come out.

Interr: You did not see them actually?

Powers: No, I did not. I saw very little. There was just the inside of the cockpit mostly itself. Some very violent things happened and I don't know what they were. I

don't recall hearing any crunching of metal, any snapping or breaking or anything. I do recall things flying around the cockpit, the maps and there was some dust in there too - I should have had a vacuum cleaner. It settled - after this violent action it went through here, only momentarily, it settled into a nose-high inverted spin. I can't estimate the angle but I know as I was - the nose was here, the cockpit here, I was sitting here looking this way - all I could see was sky going around. And, fast. I don't know how fast. I have no idea of how many Gs that - G forces that I had but there were enough until I couldn't push it myself with my hands and my feet back into the seat.

Interr: You were out of the seat at this time ?

Powers: Well, I was hanging on the seatbelts.

Interr: I see.

Powers: I always keep my seatbelt fairly tight and never loosen it during the flight. But, either it had stretched enough or given enough or something so that I was too far forward to use the ejection seat and it was impossible

to get back into the position to safely use the ejection seat. I have no idea - there were no symptoms of red-out or black-out from these G forces. The forces seemed to throw me forward and up, almost at, say, a 45° angle out of the seat, as well as I can recall.

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I wasn't sitting *in* the seat, just hanging on the seatbelt.

It seemed like I wanted to go out and forward.

Interr: Why don't you go ahead and tell us in your own words, Frank, the sequence of events thereafter.

Powers: This violent maneuver ended up in the inverted spin and going around and around. The only thing I could think of was destroy the aircraft; reached up to get the destruct switches and said, "Well, I'd better wait and see if I can get out." So, I didn't touch the switches or if I did touch them, I didn't flip the switches. And then I started thinking about getting into - seeing if I could assume an ejection position and I tried to get back in the seat. This occupied me for quite a while.

Interr: Was your canopy still on?

Powers: Yes, it was still on. I couldn't think of any other way

to get out of the aircraft except the ejection seat at this time. That was sort of a fixed idea I had -- this is the only way you can get out. And I pushed and squirmed and tried to tighten the seatbelts - oh, somewhere along in here I did pull my emergency oxygen valve. This was just something that came natural to do but I didn't disconnect the oxygen hose ... the seat ... there. It was still connected. I don't know how long I did this or how long it took to fall but I kept at this, trying to get into this ejection position for, what seemed to me, a long time. The last altitude I can recall seeing on the altimeter was -- well, I know 34,000 - it might have been a few hundred feet above or below but it was passing through approximately that area. I assume there was probably a considerable lag but I can remember the 34,000. At this particular time I remembered talking to another boy who had had to bail out of the U-2, before they had ejection seats, and I talked to him about it. He told me what had happened to him - he couldn't get his canopy out. And

he said that he had just said to himself, "Stop and think." And I remembered this and I said to myself the same thing, "stop and think." So, I just quit everything. And, it entered my mind there that I could climb out of the air plane. So, I grabbed the two canopy handles , tried to pull them both simultaneously, but the canopy opened from the right - the normal way first - flew open. As I brought the other one all the way back, it flew off to the left. I jettisoned the canopy somewhere after I had seen this 34,000 altitude. I never looked at the instruments again or I do not recall doing it. Let's see, what was --? Yes, I got my seatbelt, unfastened it, and was thrown forward and out of the air plane but I hung over the top of the forward part of the canopy. About like this, something like this over the air plane - and knocked the rear-view mirror off at that time. I didn't feel it but I just saw it float out ahead, it looked like. Then I tried to get back in the aircraft and couldn't because I wanted to get to the destruction switches. Couldn't even straighten up

or get back in, I couldn't reach back in, and I couldn't get out because I assume this oxygen hose was still holding me here. I don't know how long I tried that. I knew that I was getting much closer to the ground than 34,000 feet. I have no idea how long it took me to get in the position I was in at this time but I could not - it was impossible for me to get to these destruction switches. Finally, -- oh, another thing that happened in this. When the canopy went, I fogged up. My face ... couldn't see. I finally just gave a big lunge and felt something give which I assume was the breakage of the oxygen connection and was immediately - felt like a - felt like I was floating. Within a very short time, just a matter of seconds, I think, the parachute opened and I had not pulled the rip cord. I can only assume that the automatic part hung on to the seatbelt and it was pulled when it threw me up when I unfastened it. When the parachute--is this going too fast?

Interr: It's all right.

Powers: When the parachute opened, I realized that I was below

15,000 feet because that was the automatic - that's the altitude that the automatic part was set at.

Interr: That is the parachute automatic -- ?

Powers: Yes, it would open two seconds after reaching 15,000 feet, I believe was the way it operated. So, I - not being able to see, I took off my face ~~blades~~ ^{PLATE}. The air was thin so I know I was high but I'm sure I was under the 15,000 feet. I would estimate - well, I'd say - well, it's hard to estimate there but I'd say definitely above 10 and probably 12 or 13,000 feet. It took a long time to get to the ground; I have no idea of how long. The air was thin but, of course, I was breathing pretty fast at that time anyway. I remember sort of gasping a few times; I mean, trying to take real deep breaths. I don't know whether it was to try to calm myself or what. Very--

Interr: You were conscious all this time ?

Powers: Yes.

Interr: No black-outs ?

Powers: If there was any black-out, I'm not conscious of the fact.

And I would say I was absolutely conscious all the time.

Somewhere shortly after the parachute opened, and I
had the face ~~blown~~^{blown} off, I saw a flat piece which - part
of the airplane - a flat piece which was falling down like
a piece of wood would fall -- tumbling. But I could not
tell the distance it was away from me.

Interr: You didn't recognize what part of the airplane it was?

Powers: Well, at the time I thought it was a wing but it looked
too small but then that depends on how far it was away.

Interr: No reference point to determine this?

Powers: No reference point at all. I'm sure it was - if it was
closer it could have been probably a control ^{surface} ~~surface~~

But, there was no way I could tell what the size was.

And, as well as I can recall, that is the only piece of
the aircraft I saw. I saw nothing hit the ground. Well,
at the time I didn't even think of trying to watch for
where this thing would hit or what would happen.

Because then I started thinking of this map, showing the
escape routes. I remembered that I had that in my
pocket and I got it out and tore it up and just threw it

out. Now, there might have been a piece or two caught in the parachute but I think it would go on through, I don't know, but they couldn't have put that thing together. And, also, I had this coin and ~~pin~~ ^{pin} ~~pen~~ that - I took my gloves off, got the ~~pen~~ ^{pin} out, dropped it in my pocket and threw the coin away. I kept looking around; I was so high I didn't know which way I was going. It seemed like first I would drift easterly and then back westerly.

Interr: Frank, I believe you did have a black eye as a result of this?

Powers: Yes, and I--

Interr: Do you recall when that happened?

Powers: I have no idea. The only time that I knew about it was about three days after the capture and someone mentioned it to me - asked me if I was a boxer or had been a boxer. I said, 'No, why?' He said, 'Well, you have a black eye.' I believe it was - I think it was the left eye but it was blacked up here, not underneath, but above the eye here.

Interr: That was the only injury, to your knowledge, that you

sustained through the -- ?

Powers: No, I had some scratches on my right leg. I don't know when they happened but it must have been when I came out of the airplane, maybe scraping on the canopy. But I had the underwear, the pressure suit, and the thick flying suit over that. So, it would be hard to get scratches and I couldn't understand that. But, scratches and bruises on the right leg. I kept trying to find out where I would land as I came down. At first I could see no detail. It was fairly high altitude. There was a woods in one direction. Part of the time I would drift toward this forest, part of the time away from it. I tried to guide the chute in that direction. I don't know whether I succeeded in getting it that way or not but I was drifting toward this forest most of the time except for the periods - until just the opposite direction.

Interr: What was your motivation in taking the ~~plane~~ ^{WIN} out of the coin?

Powers: I really don't know. I kept thinking that - well, see,

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I hoped not to be captured. That was the thing. But, there was always the possibility and I was thinking, "well, I'll be tortured" - I knew I would be tortured, and that was very strongly in my mind. And, I would have probably used it if I could have kept it that long, if they tortured me and I couldn't stand the torture.

Interr: You thought it was a better chance of regaining the ^{fin} ~~pen~~ if you took it out of the coin?

Powers: Yes, I did.

Interr: And you threw the coin away?

Powers: I figured the coin - that it would be taken. I thought in maybe just a pin lying/the pocket would be overlooked - and it was for a while. I didn't take it out to kill myself. I thought about it though in this parachute - should I do it? Well, there was a possibility that I wouldn't be captured so--. I probably wouldn't have done it anyway, I don't know. It was--well, I didn't.

Interr: I don't think anybody could answer that question.

Powers: I don't know. But, I actually thought about it and wondered if maybe I shouldn't have just stayed in the

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airplane. I was thinking of these things. I was jumping from one thought to another. But the primary reason that I wanted to retain the pin was for tortures. If I couldn't take it then I wanted to get where I couldn't feel the pain.

Interr: Frank, while you were coming down, do you recall seeing any other aircraft around or contrails or anything?

Powers: No, I do not recall seeing a single contrail but I don't remember definitely looking around the sky. I was looking down mostly and trying to think what I had in my pockets, trying to think - I even felt for my seat pack and couldn't find it, but I feel sure it was with me. Maybe it had slipped down the end of the straps it was on but I felt for it and couldn't find it. I knew I had some stuff in the pocket. That one map, that coin, and I didn't know what else though, I couldn't remember.

Interr: Did you see any activity on the ground when you were coming down?

Powers: Well, at first it was nothing but as I came closer to the

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ground, I saw a car coming along a road toward a little village and I was headed for this village also. The forest was on beyond the village, maybe two or three hundred yards, I don't know how far. But it seemed as if as I got closer to the ground I was going faster and faster. I suppose that is the sensation of a parachute. This is my first trip that way. But I suspected that these people were watching me when they turned into the village and turned to the left where I was going to hit. Of course, by this time, I was getting pretty close to the ground. They stopped on the outskirts of the village, started running toward the position it seemed I would hit in. As well as I can remember there were only two people. About 25, 30, or 40 feet from where I hit there was a tractor working with a tractor driver and another man standing around. They were very near. There were some high tension wires close by but I don't know how far I missed them. They weren't close enough to be dangerous. I hit the ground, fell -- oh, just a short while before I hit the

ground, I took the safety clip off the parachute so that I could release one of the shroud lines on one side of the parachute. When I hit the ground, the chute started to - I don't believe it drug me but it was trying to. I don't know whether I skidded across the ground any or not, I don't think so. But one of those men from the tractor I think it was or one from the car, I don't know, went out and started gathering in the parachute. At the same time I released one of the straps of the parachute - one of the shoulder straps and the chute collapsed. Someone else grabbed me by the arm and helped me up and started trying to take off my helmet. They were trying to speak to me at this time but I just completely ignored them and tried to take this thing off and they helped me, helped me unzip it and get the ... off. One of them got my pistol that I had strapped on, another got the hunting knife that I had on the parachute. I think that's all they took at that time. And somewhere very shortly after I was on my feet, had the helmet off, they tried to ask me some questions and I showed them that

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I couldn't understand them. They kept asking me if there two of us and kept pointing at me and I got the impression that they wanted to know if there were two people in the airplane. I shook my head no and said no, I suppose, but they got the idea there was only one. But one of them pointed up and I looked up and I'm almost positive that I saw another parachute coming down.

Interr: Who was this?

Powers: I have no idea. I knew there was no tail chute in the airplane. That entered my mind - that the tail chute had some way opened but there wasn't one. It was very high --

Interr: Did you see any other aircraft at that time?

Powers: Saw no aircraft, nothing. This was very high and I can't be absolutely positive that it was a parachute but, well, it looked like it, and that's what I thought it was. But they seemed perfectly satisfied and believed that there was no one with me. They gathered up the parachute, myself - well, at this time, there were I don't know how many people, school children it

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looked like and a lot of people all around me. I hit maybe within a hundred yards from this village, I don't remember the exact distance there and I think the whole village was out there. I knew it was sort of useless to try to run through this group and head for that forest with my pressure suit on. You don't do a hundred yards very fast with that thing. So, I just went with them - no resistance. They took all of this equipment to this little car that I had seen earlier and put the parachute, helmet, and -- I can't remember them putting the seat pack in there at that time, but when we got to another village, they took the seat pack out. So, apparently the seat pack was still attached to the suit. There was no damage to it as it had hit the ground and come off the parachute when the chute opened. But I can't understand why I didn't feel it when I was trying to find it. They took me to a larger village in the car. There was people all in civilian clothes. They had me in the middle of the front seat with a man on each side and there were three or four men in the back. The roads were muddy

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and rough. I made a sign that I was thirsty and they stopped at a house on the outskirts of this village where I landed and went into the house and brought out a glass of water. Offered me cigarettes. And they did a lot of talking back and forth but I didn't -- oh, one of them who had the pistol apparently knew the Roman alphabet because he pointed at something on this gun here where it said USA AND asked me something that sounded like American - Americanosky - or something like this, and I shook my head yes. They tried to talk to me but we couldn't talk, we couldn't communicate. So, I just sat there trying to think and it was very hard to think. We drove for I'd say maybe 30 minutes, I don't know, on this rough road going not very fast, but I'd say roughly 30 minutes until we came to a larger village. I heard later that this was all a collective farm and this was the collective farm center some way or the other. And they stopped on the road I was on where it intersected what looked like the main street through the village.

Interr: Did any one of these people seem to be in charge?

Powers: No, they seemed to be just a group of private citizens.

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at the trial.

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Interr: In the automobile? From the automobile?

Powers: One of them definitely and I think -- well, the evidence is in the trial definitely, the names, because they each one testified or at least four of them did, and I think there were about six that accompanied me.

Interr: Those were the people in the car rather than the tractor driver?

Powers: Well, one of them definitely was in the ^{car} evidence. I don't know whether it appeared in ^{the} court or not, but it was something that I saw, a statement that he had written. And, he was the driver of the car. And, he was a chauffeur for such and such a collective farm. And his friend, is the way that he referred to the man who was with him. "I and my friend were" doing something. So, as far as I know they were not officials. The first man in uniform that I saw was in this second village. He was standing on a street corner there. They stopped there, got me out, talked to him, and then they started to search me. For the first time, they started to search me. They - oh, I had packages

of cigarettes and a cigarette lighter and - I don't remember where those Russian rubles were that I had, whether they were in the seat pack or where, but I had some other stuff in my pockets, I don't know what it was. It - they took me across the street into a building and there were other people with uniforms who came in just a few minutes later, one or two. But these were military uniforms. The first man was I would say a policeman. I don't know how long I stayed there but one of these military men apparently had been in Germany, I spoke German because he asked me in German if I spoke German. I told him no. No one there spoke English. So, I stayed there for quite a while. They made several telephone calls and people kept bringing in pieces of equipment. They brought in a section ~~TRACKER~~ of the ~~tr...~~ and I saw quite a bit of ~~tr...~~ that they brought in. They set it over in the corner and I saw it. They brought in ~~pieces~~ of aluminum about so big that someone had picked up and brought in to the center. I don't know how many pieces they brought in, there were several small pieces. They made me strip

and searched me. Didn't find the pin at this time.

They found everything else. Took my boots off, took my underwear off but let me put it back on. They kept the pressure suit but let me put on the heavy flying suit back of - back over the underwear. They sent for, what I assumed was, a doctor - fairly young woman. I don't know the age but I do remember that she seemed, she looked very sympathetic. She listened to my heart, painted the scratches and bruises on my leg, and I think that's all. Maybe she took my temperature, I don't remember, but did a few things. She didn't stay very long and left and people going in and out, they just left me sitting there. I tried to lean back and relax but couldn't. It seemed like I was there for quite a while, but I have no idea of how long. I know it was over an hour and possibly, maybe more than two hours, it was quite a while.

Interr: Frank, when you hit the ground or in that time period, did you notice the time at all?

Powers: (Evidently Powers shook his head in the negative) but I think I can figure out fairly close the time this happened

by the map and the flight log. I was fairly close to schedule although, you know, the schedule was 30 minutes late. The times between each point was fairly close and it won't be far off.

Interr: Do you recall the direction of your inverted spin?

Powers: Well, that's why I mentioned the other day, I'll have to try to visualize it again. Let's see - nose up, parachute -- I think it was counter-clockwise.

Interr: As you saw it?

Powers: Well, one thing is that when I opened the canopy, being upside down, it flew off to the left. So, that would more or less indicate that I was turning to my right which would be from my position at the time, counter-clockwise.

Interr: Frank, since we're back there again, you say you're not sure whether you saw the wings fold or not but do you recall -- ?

Powers: I definitely didn't see them.

Interr: Do you recall seeing any external damage to the wings or anything or did you see the wings at all after you

saw them flying?

Powers: Well, it seems to me that I, when it started turning right, that I looked out at the wing but I saw nothing to excite my suspicions of -- no ..., responded very nicely and came out and then this started. I saw nothing else.

Interr: You seem to have good ... control--?

Powers: It was just natural.

Interr: It felt like it was normal?

Interr: The elevator control was --?

Powers: The elevator control, nothing.

Interr: When you found you were without elevator control, did you have time to or did you check your rear-view mirror to see whether or not you could see any damage?

Powers: No, I've often thought and wished I had done that.

Of course, the sun shade was over this and I had both hands on the control column at the time and at first just a normal, gradual pull-back on the stick to bring the nose up and it didn't so I came on back with it.

And by this time it was --

Interr: So, you didn't actually get any look at the ... for damage ~~ext~~ at any time?

Powers: No, I didn't. The only time I saw it was when they took me to review the wreckage when it was in Gorki Park Field, I think it was Gorki Park. That was around the 15th or so of May.

Interr: Now, along in here - I don't remember that you mentioned it but when this thing first happened, you appeared to have normal power?

Powers: Yes, because I was --

Interr: Now, when all of this other was going on, did you get a chance to see what happened to your ~~eng~~ ^{ENGINE} performance?

Powers: Well, see, I can't remember exactly when I saw this but I do remember definitely seeing the RPM drop. But, I when don't remember when it was, I can't remember/hearing this ... I was at 70,000 feet at the time.

Interr: Where did you land, Frank, do you--?

Powers: Twenty-five or more miles south of Sverdlovsk, south maybe a little east of south. I think if I had some sort of a map, I mean a large map, I could show you. Maybe

something like my flight map. These are--

Interr: These are pretty hard to ... You've seen these before haven't you, Frank?

Powers: The one with the plots?

Interr: Yes.

Powers: Yes. And I can't understand that either. Now, I don't know about this--how big is this map? what?

Interr: Sixty miles is from here to here, Frank.

Powers: Let's see, from here to here. That's about 30 here or a little more than 30 I guess.

Interr: This distance would be, yes about 30, 35 to 40 miles--

Powers: Well, it appeared to me now from back down here -- there was a very important flight line. I remember you telling me - I think it was you, you or [redacted] telling me that between two lakes here there was an unknown object - they thought it was a building complex which it was, I could see through the driftsite. But, I was perfectly on the flight line. It couldn't have been better, perfectly. It seemed to me that I remembered that this was a larger turn this way but I don't know,

And I thought this one was more than 90°, it is a little but not much, but I thought it was more than that.

Came through here fairly well on course, turned here, leveled out - now, this is something I noticed the other day. Is this the city of Sverdlovsk?

Interr: Yes, right there, Frank.

Powers: Well, it seemed to me that my flight line went over the southern edge of the city. It seems to me that I remember that, I don't know. There was an airfield that wasn't on the map southeast of the city and the flight line went directly over it. After I had rolled out of this turn, got lined up on course, recorded my time of turn, altitude, weather conditions, it happened right there. I landed somewhere south of Sverdlovsk, over 25 miles I would say - maybe a little east.

Interr: This would be about --

Powers: Yes. Somewhere - I don't know whether it was directly south but I think maybe a little east here, somewhere in this area.

Interr: Did you see Sverdlovsk coming down in the chute or-- ?

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Powers: I definitely saw it in the airplane but I do not remember too much the parachute in that direction.

Interr: How was the -- was the ^{weather} ~~weather~~ pretty good in this area?

Powers: Yes, it was good.

Interr: Did you see the Urals?

Powers: But I know I was never off course. Well, I didn't get any farther than this point, somewhere along in here.

Interr: The aircraft could not have made this extended turn here?

Powers: Impossible, impossible. What is that? that's over 100 miles, isn't it?

Interr: Yes.

Powers: That's sixty, impossible--

Interr: Yes, that's--

Powers: Impossible, that aircraft I'm sure went straight down.

Now, pieces of it spread out, I'm sure, but this is impossible. Oh, and on this that I mentioned the other day--I was worried about this, radar sets and people's words, people who are inclined to believe the radar

sets - well, I'm willing to take a lie detector's test on this.

Interr: Oh, now--

Powers: Because I--

Interr: That isn't what we're trying--this is a very ^{TOP SECRET} science to begin with - this ^{TRACKING} radar flying. As you notice, they'll carry a tract, after you make a turn, they will carry it because in many instances they are (dead reckoning) rather than actually plotting. And they will carry it beyond and suddenly make a correction to the actual track. But this, here, we've never been able to figure out ourselves. It's possible it might have been another aircraft.

Interr: It's entirely possible.

Interr: If there was another parachute it might have been the--

Powers: Well, now, I can't be absolutely sure but I'm certainly, much more than 75% sure that that was another parachute.

Interr: Frank, we'll probably ask you this again later on but do you recall at any time during the interrogation, did anybody mention any fighters or any other aircraft - this other one that you thought you saw the chute - did they?

Powers: The only thing that they ever mentioned was that they got me with the first shot. That's all.

Interr: Do you ever hear or did they ever refer to the possibility that they shot down their - one of their own fighters trying to get to you?

Powers: No, the only thing I heard later was that they had decorated the Captain of the rocket launching site and that's the only --

Interr: Well, we have collateral information that they did shoot down one of their own fighters and this conceivably could be the chute that you saw.

Interr: Yes, I imagine one of the things you probably did when your chute opened was to look up and see that it was intact.

Powers: Well, I didn't think of that right at first.

Interr: Oh, you didn't think of that. I was wondering if you would have noticed anything, any contrails or anything else above you.

Powers: But I did later, a few minutes. It seemed to me that that was the thing you were supposed to do and after I had taken my face plate off and everything I did look up.

By the way, I had [redacted] . . . parachute and I had his coat in a bag with the name [redacted] . . . on it. But they

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never mentioned this thing. I kept waiting and waiting
and waiting, I had already figured out that [redacted]

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[redacted]
Interr: Probably thought it was your tailor.

Powers: Well, I had already figured that he was the was the
personal (equipment) man and that was the story I would
tell. None of the pilots names have ever been mentioned.
They have no knowledge of that as far as I'm concerned,
coming from me. Kept - I kept waiting and waiting and
waiting for them to mention - because they brought a
bunch of stuff in to question me on and I saw this bag
with [redacted] on it and I kept waiting for that question.

I knew they would ask me who this was but they never
did and I'm surprised.

Interr: Can we go back just one small stage farther to the
flash business. As I gather, one gets the impression
that there was a considerable persistence to this
flash. I mean, you sort of felt yourself pushed and
you sort of looked up around and you saw the flash.
The question that really comes to mind is are you in

a position to guess or remember whether there might not have been two such events? That is, whether there was a second flash following the first one or was there enough time spacing in there that the flash that you saw was not related to what gave you the push?

Powers: Well, I'll tell you it wasn't anything like a flashbulb from a camera because I've seen a million of those and you have a light and then it's gone. I felt this or sensed this explosion, looked up, everything was orange, everything that I saw, I mean, all the sky and so forth. Then I started working around in the cockpit, and I do not ever remember seeing this orange color again.

Interr: You see, the point is as they mentioned, they got you on the first shot and the question--this, of course, implies two things - not the least of which there were other shots even if later and this, of course, is the point of--. You felt this and then you noticed the light. Those things usually are not that persistent, most explosives anyway aren't. I was wondering if there was any other second event to go along with it?

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Powers: Well, I didn't hear or feel any other explosion.

Interr: Unconsciously.

Powers: But I don't know how much time passed in that interval there. I have no way of even guessing how much time between each - or how long I looked out at this or how long it took to bring that wing up - I have no idea.

Interr: You mentioned, Frank, that they had brought in this piece of equipment into that area one of which was identifiable as the tracker. You mean just the tracker film where the camera ...

Powers: The only I could see was the film. It seemed like there was a roll - I don't know how big - but I saw a piece streaming out and I don't think I was supposed to see that. They didn't cover it up and I did see it.

Interr: Approximately how long after you landed did this happen Frank?

Powers: Well, as I said, I don't know how long I was at this place. I know it was well over an hour and probably over two hours and it could be maybe even three, I really don't know. But I'd say it was within the first hour.

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Interr: This would indicate that you and the aircraft, or pieces of the aircraft, were in fairly close proximity when you came down.

Powers: Well, I would personally think that the equipment and myself were together until I got out of the aircraft.
So, we would have hit fairly close.

Interr: That's the point that I was trying to--

Powers: They showed me later some sort of a map that had pointed on it various places where they found a wing here, a wing here, and I think the engine was not with the airplane on this map that they showed me. I don't know where it was when I was falling down.

Interr: These places that they pointed to, were they in close proximity to where you landed?

Powers: They were in an area but I don't know how large a scale the map was or what it was. So, I don't remember the distance between them, but they were scattered around over a several-mile area. It wasn't all within a mile. I'd say - oh, I can't guess.

Interr: It wasn't a vast distance, it wasn't 30 or 40--?

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Powers: No, it wasn't 30 or 40 miles. I would say it was within about 10 miles, or maybe even closer. And that's odd because the wings would probably have gone a long way or it seems to me they would, I don't know. The tail section was in fairly good condition when I saw it at ... and they might have got that Granger fairly intact, I don't know.

Interr: Following up this point that [redacted] made a while ago - the possibility of another aircraft. Was anything brought in at that time that looked like it wasn't a piece of the aircraft that you were in?

Powers: No, the pieces were badly --

Interr:

Powers: No, these were just small pieces.

Interr: Yes.

Powers: Something that someone saw and went out and picked up to carry.

Interr: Do you remember the first picture that they published supposedly of the U-2 wreckage which was not the U-2 wreckage--?

Interr: Yes, I remember that.

Interr: I wonder if this could be associated with the other aircraft? the one that might have been involved?

Interr: Well, you see, there was the off chance, you might remember, that some of these came along that looked most unfamiliar.

Interr: Well, I--

Interr: ... that's the wrong place

Powers: I really don't know, I don't think so. Because I remember some of the pieces of metal they brought in had writing on them in English and also the blue paint, the same color paint as my aircraft. I might not have noticed it. I was I suppose in some shock there and might not have noticed if they had brought in a whole airplane ... there ... I don't know. Everything that I saw appeared to belong to my aircraft. I mean, the seat pack, the tracker film - I don't know whether it was on the reels or not, I think so - and in a pretty damaged condition, and some pieces of metal in irregular shapes. And in reviewing this

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wreckage I noticed holes in the aircraft's wings. I
don't remember seeing any holes when the wing dropped
and I think I looked out that way. I don't remember
seeing anything that resembled a hole in the wing but
I think--

Interr: Do you recall the larger holes ^{were} on the under side of the
wing, were they not?

Interr: Yes, and there were a lot of small holes on the other
side too, I think.

Powers: What about the top side?

Interr: Was there any fuel streaming out?

Powers: I never saw any.

Interr: No indication in your instruments?

Powers: Well, you see, the wing is back behind and you can see
part of it, you can see the tank sticking out on the
leading edge of the wing. Normally, when that drops
you don't look out and really try to see -- I think I
glanced backwards ... I couldn't see much of the wing.

Interr: When you did glance around there, when this wing dropped,
was there anything unusual about this? In other words,

if a wing goes down ... sudden or does it just roll over?

Powers: No, it just felt like a normal turn that you'd normally get in flying along. You can't hold it level all the time, it would go a little this way, a little that way. And it responded very smoothly but the nose couldn't ...

Interr: Frank, did they every comment about or ask you where we obtained the information for the radio stations in the fixes that we had on your map?

Powers: They were talking about that but I don't remember too much about what they said about it. They didn't seem to be too interested, they didn't press it too much. Even the places we had marked airfields and so forth on there and targets and so forth, they didn't press that too much. I'm sure they asked about it, I remember them asking about it but it wasn't pressed.

Interr: Here's one of the wings.

Powers: This is the upper side.

Interr: Yes, that's the upper side, Frank. This is the right wing.

Powers: Well, this is not the place that I saw it in. This is not

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the building it was in when I saw it, I don't think. Maybe it was - no, I don't think so. Do you happen to have a photograph of the display that they had at this park in Moscow? I mean, the whole thing, an over-all view?

Interr: No, I don't have the over-all view--

Powers: Oh, now, I definitely saw this wing. This is the one I didn't see - no, this one I can't remember ever seeing.
What is this?

Interr: That's the hall at Gorki Park.

Powers: Well, it wasn't--

Interr: Was it Gorki Park, to your knowledge, that you -- ?

Powers: Well, someone here mentioned Gorki Park. I don't remember the name of it but I think, if I had a map of Moscow, maybe I could show the area where it is.

Interr: Right.

Powers: And perhaps point out the places--

Interr: Perhaps we had better hold the pictures until after the formal recordings here and then we can go over them and get some additional information. Unfortunately, pictures don't show up too good on tape recorders.

Interr: That's what I was trying to do, get something to identify the pictures so that we could look at - this is like looking at a map and you say not here--

Interr: You mentioned their comment that they had made this operation with a single and a first shot. Did they say anything more in the sense of bragging about their missile system?

Powers: Oh, they mentioned that quite often. Oh, you mean bragging about other things in the missile system?

Interr: Or this kind of a system, the one that was used to bring you down. Do you remember anything that they said about it?

Powers: Well, they mentioned this one-shot deal so often that I got the impression that they were trying to convince themselves. It was just too much, too much.

Interr: They knew, of course, the altitude that you flying at the time?

Powers: Well, I don't think so.

Interr: They weren't sure?

Powers: I don't know. I told them the maximum altitude of the

aircraft was 68,000 feet. I thought and felt sure that I had been shot down by some external explosion that brought me down. So, I knew they knew this altitude fairly accurately in order to do this. Or, this was my thinking. I tried to save as much altitude of the aircraft as possible so I told them 68,000 feet. And, fortunately, on my flight plans, we used a base altitude plus. The base altitude was 48. I was afraid that they could figure out by the Mach and so forth that this might be wrong, but apparently they never did.

Interr: Did they ever mention the altitude capability of their rockets?

Powers: They mentioned that they could do it even higher than this.

Interr: Even higher than 68,000?

Powers: Yes, but that's bragging. Well, that's my impression, they were just bragging, they're braggarts.

Interr: What did they call this missile or this missile system?
Did they have a name for it?

Powers: The only thing they said - a rocket.

Interr: A rocket.

Powers: Yes. Brought it down with a rocket and the very first shot. I think they said it that way.

Interr: Did you get any feel of how many they thought they might have ordinarily used?

Powers: No.

Interr: In other words, that was an elation with doing it with the first one, sort of thing.

Powers: No, they mentioned nothing like that, that it would normally take more or less. They just said the first shot.

Interr: This rocket crew - you say they decorated the Captain?

Powers: The Captain of the - man who was in charge of shooting of the rocket, got a decoration.

Interr: Did they have the whole crew or how many did they have? Or how many - just him, did they single him out?

Powers: I don't know. It was during the interrogation that they told me that this man had been decorated, had received a medal. But, you receive a medal in the Soviet Union for digging a ditch, or flying an airplane, or anything.

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I asked them why, since they could shoot me down, they let me come so far inside their territory. They said they wanted to make sure of what I was doing. Of course, I immediately thought of the cargo-type aircraft that was shot down just over the Turkish border, they didn't wait too long on that. They also were very interested on where I was on April 9th, that was the night of another flight. I told them that I couldn't remember where I was on April 9th, I had no idea, and asked them what day of the week that was on. They looked it up for me and it was a Saturday. I told them probably drunk at the officer's club. They seemed to believe me. But they asked if I knew anything about that and I said that one pilot never knew where another pilot was flying, that we didn't pry into each other's business, it was kept from each other.

Interr: Did they ever say anything to you in this interrogation process to imply in any way, shape or form they had advanced information of the --of your going?

Powers: No--

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Interr: They didn't imply anything of this sort?

Powers: No, I didn't receive an impression of that sort from anything they said. They showed me what they had as a radar track, it was much different from this, although the first part, I think, was very similar. The altitudes they had me was 20 - well, according to this thing they had picked me up at considerable distance in Afghanistan and had me all the rest of the way. And also, they had me right on course as I was so I assume that was fairly accurate. They had on this 20,000 meters, 20,000 meters, 20,000 meters up until approximately the point of Chelyabinsk there, they jumped up to 22,000 meters. They had another reading after that, in the area where this happened, of 20,000 meters.

Interr: Did they end the track on what they showed you at the point where it happened?

Powers: It ended right there and it was on the wall of the building - that was just drawn there.

Interr: Where did it end?

Powers: It just came up here and here and they had a big star
or explosive type--

Interr: Where was this star?

Powers: Well, in this display they had something on the wall but
I don't know whether it was over a map or not. That
seemed maybe to be just drawn in. But the chart they
showed me -- I don't remember exactly what kind it was,
it seemed to be something like this type. They wouldn't
let me touch this stuff, just show it to me and ask me
about this and this.

Interr: Did you ask them, Frank, why they didn't send fighters
up to shoot you down?

Powers: I talked to them about that but I don't remember whether
I asked them that question or not. They asked me if
I had seen any fighters and I told them I had seen this
down at the other place.

Interr: They didn't ever tell you that they had fighters that were
capable of getting to your altitude?

Powers: No. They mentioned that they - I don't know where--

Interr: But they wouldn't admit that they didn't have them?

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Powers: Oh, no. They mentioned in their newspapers later that they had set an altitude record. Well, later on some of these people said that they had planes that would fly at this altitude. But if they had, I would have never gotten 1200 miles or ever how far it was.

Interr: Frank, they asked you about this specific date of 9 April. Did they ever inquire about any other dates?

Powers: No, that was the main one they were interested in.

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By the way, [] nothing was ever mentioned about the operation we had--

Interr: Is that right? I was going to ask you about that later, but they never asked you?

Powers: They didn't say a word about that, not a single word did they mention. I had the impression that they knew nothing of anything that happened.

Interr: Remarkable, isn't it.

Powers: They mentioned though - they wanted to know if I knew anything about the B-57Ds that flew out of Germany in 1956. I assume that was when [] was flying from Germany, but I knew nothing about them.

Interr: Did they ask you if you had ever personally flown over the Soviet Union prior to that?

Powers: Oh, they pressed that very hard and long - only one time.

Interr: For the record, this time he's referring to is July and August 1957 during Operation SOFTTOUCH AT ... And they never asked you at any time about this operation.

Powers: They asked nothing about any flights made -- they only asked about the one, on April the 9th.

Interr: Did they debate with you about this distance of the extra two kilometers in height?

Powers: The extra two kilometers?

Interr: Yes, you said they carried you at 20 kilometers and then they had to - had you going up, did they--?

Powers: No, I--

Interr: Did they query you on this point?

Powers: No, I just was looking at this and I saw it and I pointed out and said, "You better have your radar checked." They didn't say anything. These were just the regular interrogators, there were no technical men or engineers that showed me that.

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Interr: I believe the trial transcript, Frank, mentioned that the map was like on a roll or something. Did they take the map off the board we had it mounted on?

Powers: When I saw it, it was off the boards - when they showed it to me. Every piece was off the board and they had pasted it on a paper.

Interr: That explains the ... business.

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[REDACTED] This is the end of tape #8. We'll sign off now. The time is 5 minutes of 3:00 p.m.

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